



GAZEBO EXPRESS

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWS AND EVENT SOURCE FOR THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND • NOVEMBER 2010

TOWN COUNCIL BANS SALE OF SYNTHETIC MARIJUANA

Four store owners selling substances containing synthetic cannabinoids have had to remove the product from their shelves.

The Town Council voted unanimously in October to ban the sale of the substance within the town limits.

Councilman Dan Vassar asked that the issue be fast-tracked after he learned:

- Products containing the substance were being sold in town; and,
- A Highland youth was hospitalized after using one of the products marketed under the trade names K2 and Spice.

Synthetic marijuana – sold in brightly colored bags – is said to be more powerful than marijuana. Side effects range from slight tremors to seizures. Six states have banned the sale of products containing synthetic marijuana, but Indiana is not one of them.


"Thankfully, the boy from Highland is okay now. But it shows how dangerous these

products are," Vassar said. "If it harms one kid, that is one kid too many."

Vassar said he spoke with Police Chief Pete Hohnicki and Town Attorney Rhett Tauber, who took the steps necessary to craft an ordinance that makes it illegal to sell or use synthetic marijuana in town.

"The state of Indiana is looking at banning the sale of these products," he said. "But, the council felt we needed to do something now."

Despite the ban, Vassar knows the drugs are still available online and will continue to be marketed in every state until there is a national prohibition on the sale and distribution of the synthetic marijuana.

"This ordinance also forbids the use of these products anywhere in town. We have done everything we could at a local level," he said. "We want parents to be aware of what it is and the dangers these drugs pose to anyone who uses them." 

HIGHLAND GROVE BUSINESS IS BOOMING

At 100 percent capacity, Highland Grove Mall is happily bucking the effects of a lagging economy.


While other retail centers struggle to fill idle storefronts, the addition of cosmetics giant Ulta and crafts megastore Michaels have filled the last vacancies at Highland Grove.

Nationwide, the mall vacancy rate decreased to about nine percent in September in what officials hope is an improving trend.

"A fully leased, diverse mall creates a shopping destination that leads to increased

sales for a number of retailers in one location," Redevelopment Director Cecile Petro said.

"Filled malls encourage development in the areas surrounding the retail hub. Highland Grove is very much a success story for our community."

Although the mall itself is fully leased, Petro said several outlot spaces remain available for rent. 

FOR OUTLOT LEASING OPPORTUNITIES:
Call Cecile Petro at (219) 972-7598 or SRS management company at (630) 203-6320.

GMA, WOODRUFF INVITE LOCAL VETERAN TO NYC

David and Kim Cox got front row seats to one of the hottest events in the country – compliments of Bob Woodruff and "Stand Up for Heroes."

The Highland residents were treated to weeklong festivities including an extravaganza hosted by Jon Stewart and featuring blockbuster entertainers Jerry Seinfeld, Tony Bennett and Bruce Springsteen. The week was capped by an appearance at Good Morning America.

Cox, a critical care nurse in Iraq, cared for Woodruff when his convoy was attacked in 2006. Since then, Cox has been treated for post-traumatic stress disorder.

After recovering from his injuries, Bob and his wife, Lee, founded the ReMIND Foundation to help returning soldiers who have been injured in service to their country.

TOWN HOSTS REGIONAL TABLE TENNIS TOURNEY

Nationally ranked table tennis players from around the country will gather at Lincoln Center for a two-day competition in November that has cemented Highland's reputation as a destination for those who like to play and watch the lightning-fast game of ping pong.

About 200 players are expected to compete this year, the seventh time Highland has hosted the event. Spectators are welcome.

WHEN: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday, **Nov. 13** and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, **Nov. 14.**

WHERE: Lincoln Center

INFO: Call (574) 261-4545.

CABBAGE RECIPE WINNERS

From more than a dozen diverse entries including the more exotic Cabbage Bread, judges at the town's first Cabbage Fest winnowed their favorites to four winners:

Cabbage Stew: Ed Pogorzelski

Cabbage Onion Quiche: Joan Walker

NeeNee's Red Cabbage: Jeannine Calderon

Pot Columbki: Nancy Doffin

Look for the winning recipes at www.highland.in.gov

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NEWS TIP? STORY IDEA?

Send your suggestions to:



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TRAFFIC CONTROL

\$450,000 GRANT ALLOWS ENGINEERS TO IMPLEMENT PUBLIC SAFETY SYSTEM AT INTERSECTIONS THROUGHOUT HIGHLAND

First Group Engineering will oversee the installation of the Opticom System at all intersections with traffic signals.

Funded by a \$450,000 federal grant, the new traffic system will be activated by public safety personnel.

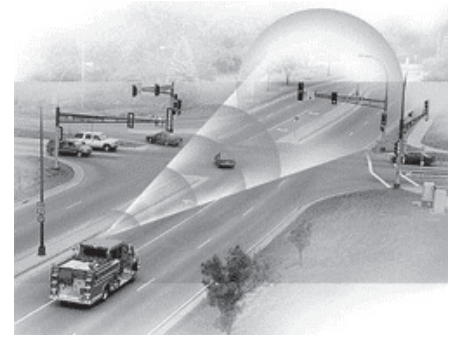
When in use, the activation turns a signal green allowing first responders – police, fire and emergency medical services – to safely access an intersection.

Police Deputy Commander George Georgeff, who is spearheading the project, said the system will create a safer environment for emergency service workers, pedestrians and vehicular traffic.

Benefits of the Opticom System include:

- Reduced incident response times;
- Improved emergency personnel safety; and,
- Increased efficiency of emergency resources.

In addition to public safety use, Chief Pete Hojnicky said the town may extend the use of the Opticom system to Public Works during snow season.



ABOUT OPTICOM

Opticom is a traffic control system that provides a green light to first responders. Vehicles equipped with the system have an emitter that broadcasts a signal to a receiver mounted on/near a traffic light. White lights notify the emergency responder that the traffic signal is engaged and will pre-empt traffic. Flashing white lights, which are activated for all other traffic, serve as notice that the red light signals an emergency.

NEW RENTAL PROPERTY ORDINANCE TO ENSURE REGULATORY OVERSIGHT

The Town Council is considering a local law aimed at providing regulatory oversight for rental dwellings.

Town Council President Mark Herak said the ordinance gives the town leverage to ensure that rental properties are maintained. It also forces landlords to include provisions in rental agreements that would allow them to terminate leases for tenants found to be engaging in criminal activity.

"Our police officers are repeatedly called to the same dwellings and those dwellings – by and large – are rentals," Herak said. "We want to provide safeguards that will allow landlords to evict tenants if they – or their guests – are engaging in criminal activity, which includes illegal drugs. That type of behavior is a detriment to our community."



As part of the rental property ordinance, landlords would apply for a rental permit, which would require a dwelling inspection. The proposed inspection fee is \$200.

The Town Council is expected to vote on the ordinance before the end of the year.

COLLECTION DRIVE AIDS SERVICE MEMBERS

Highland-based Operation SOS is getting ready for it's next holiday blitz — and they need your help.

Operation SOS — Support Our Service members — was formed in 2008 by Highland resident Colleen Aguirre as a way to support our soldiers overseas.

In the last two years, hundreds of individuals have donated items. Others have come together for parties where they have packed and shipped more than 1,200 boxes of toiletries and goodies.

This year's goal is to pack and ship 500 boxes for delivery over the holidays.

INFO: Call (219) 923-5799

HOW YOU CAN HELP ...

PACKING PARTY

The next packing party begins at 2 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 28 at Wicker Park Social Center, 2000 Ridge Road. Volunteers are needed to pack boxes.

ITEMS NEEDED INCLUDE ...

- soap
- deodorant
- shampoo
- toothpaste
- dental floss
- tooth brushes
- baby wipes
- cotton swabs
- disposable razors
- Band-aids
- lip balm
- coffee, tea
- ramen soups
- pastas
- canned meats
- sanitary products
- OTC pain relievers
- sun block
- flea collars
- mechanics gloves
- foot warmers
- medicated powder

Drop off items in specially marked containers at Lincoln Center before Nov. 28.

CASH DONATIONS

Aguirre said the group has spent more than \$11,000 to ship boxes of donated items.

Operation SOS is a 501 c3 not-for-profit. Anyone wishing to contribute should make a check payable to:

Operation SOS
P.O. Box 9308
Highland, IN 46322

DRUG, WEAPONS DROP-OFF PROGRAM A HUGE SUCCESS

The first prescription drugs and weapons drop-off day was so successful police have already planned another event.

The Police Department and Drug Enforcement Administration collected more than 112 pounds of prescription drugs and other medications Sept. 25. The DEA took possession of the drugs, disposing of them in accordance with federal regulations.

Too often, people dispose of unused prescriptions by flushing them down a drain, Police Chief Pete Hojnicky said.

"By bringing them to us, more than 100 pounds of medications were diverted from other disposal methods where these drugs


NEXT DROP-OFF DAY

WHEN: 8 a.m. to noon Saturday, **Dec. 4**

WHERE: Police Department, 3333 Ridge Road

NOTE: If you are relinquishing a handgun, please unload it prior to drop-off. All information is confidential.

could be misused or abused," Hojnicky said. "Proper disposal also prevents the drugs from entering our waterways."

In addition to unwanted medications, residents also turned over one handgun and numerous boxes of ammunition. 

LANGEL'S SETTLEMENT

Rodney Langel, owner of Langel's Pizza, 2833 Highway Avenue, will pay the town \$3,000 in a cash settlement that satisfies a 2007 agreement between Langel and the Highland Redevelopment Commission.

The agreement allowed the restaurant to construct an enclosed addition that encroaches on the public sidewalk.

Redevelopment Director Cecile Petro said the project brought new patrons to the downtown area and increased foot traffic.

As part of the construction, Langel replaced broken irrigation and electrical systems on his property and provided a curb cut for increased accessibility.

KIWANIS PANCAKE DAY

Join the Highland Kiwanians for a delicious flapjack breakfast. All proceeds benefit Highland K-Kids, Builders Club, Key Club and Dollars for Scholars.

WHEN: 8 a.m. to noon

Sunday, **Nov. 21**

WHERE: Elk's Lodge, 3120 45th St.

TICKETS: \$6 for adults; \$4 for children under 12; free for kids under 2

INFO: Call (219) 614-0270 for tickets or pay at the door.

PARENTS' NIGHT OUT

The Highland Youth Softball Association will host a Parents' Night Out featuring live entertainment and raffles. Silent auction items include a trip to Las Vegas, Chicago Bulls basketball tickets and much, much more. A percentage of all proceeds from the sale of beer and "Fast Pitch" martinis will go to the league.

WHEN: 7 p.m. to midnight, Saturday, **Nov. 20**

WHERE: Langel's Pizza, 2833 Highway Ave.

TICKETS: \$20 per person; includes dinner and soft drinks. Every ticket will be entered into a drawing for four Blackhawk's tickets.

INFO: Call (219) 902-6010 or email secretary@highlandyouthsoftball.com

THE 35TH ANNUAL PUMPKIN PLOD

This all-ages Thanksgiving Day race is a six-mile course through the streets of Highland. This course is as flat as it is fast. Join your neighbors and friends for this holiday tradition. Because of construction at Lincoln Center, Parks and Recreation Superintendent Alex Brown asks residents to park at the municipal lot at Highway and Kennedy avenues and walk two blocks to the starting line. Walkers are encouraged to join the non-competitive three-mile Fun Walk!

WHEN: 9 a.m. Thursday, **Nov. 25**

WHERE: Race begins at Lincoln Street and Kennedy Avenue and ends at Lincoln Center, 2450 Lincoln St.

INFO: Call (219) 838-0114 or visit www.highlandparks.org

Registration for runners ...

BY NOV. 22: \$15 with shirt, \$10 without shirt

RACE-DAY: \$22 with shirt, \$17 without shirt

Registration for walkers ...

BY NOV. 22: \$10 with shirt, \$5 without shirt

RACE-DAY: \$17 with shirt, \$12 without shirt

FALL ARTS & CRAFTS SHOW

The best in arts and crafts will be showcased at this annual show. The two-day event features jewelry, ceramics, fiber arts and more.

WHEN: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, **Nov. 27** and

11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, **Nov. 28**

WHERE: Lincoln Center

INFO: Visit www.highlandparks.org or call (219) 838-0114.



SANTA'S MARCH

Parade with Santa through downtown Highland — beginning at First and Highway and ending at the Main Square Park gazebo.

Food and beverages will be available.

WHEN: 4:30 p.m.

Saturday, **Nov. 27**

WHERE: Main Square

APPLICATIONS: Available at Town Hall and Lincoln Center.



TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY

Join us for the lighting of the park and businesses for the holiday season.

Santa will have treat bags for good boys and girls.

Food and beverage concessions will be available.

WHEN: 5 p.m. Saturday, **Nov. 27** **WHERE:** Main Square

HOLIDAY HOME-DECORATING CONTEST

Decorate your home for the holiday season and you could be eligible for cash prizes. Enter our contest and let our Park Board be the judge of the best decorated homes. This event is open exclusively to homes in Highland. Entry forms are available at Lincoln Center.

ENTRY DEADLINE: Friday, **Dec. 3** **JUDGING OF HOMES:** Tuesday, **Dec. 7**

NOTE: A list of entries will be made public so that the community can enjoy the decorated homes.

1st PLACE PRIZE: \$50

2nd PLACE PRIZE: \$25

3rd PLACE PRIZE: \$25

BEST USE OF COLOR: \$25

BEST BLOCK: \$25

HONORABLE MENTION: \$25

INFO: Visit www.highlandparks.org or call (219) 838-0114.